

CLAIMS

1. A storage port for separating a releasably coupled task module from a retaining module, said retaining
5 module and storage port being located on different and relatively movable parts of a machine, the storage port comprising:
a member for engagement with a task module;
a mechanism for separating the task module from
10 the retaining module using a mechanical advantage;
whereby physical movement of the retaining module relative to the storage port actuates the mechanism, thereby separating the task module from the retaining module.
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2. A storage port according to claim 1 wherein the mechanism levers the task module and retaining module apart.
- 20 3. A storage port according to claim 2 wherein the member is part of the mechanism.
4. A storage port according to claim 3 wherein the member is rotatable about a pivot, such that on linear
25 movement of the retaining module relative to the storage port the task module is also pulled linearly, causing the member and hence the task module to rotate about the pivot and thus breaking contact between the task module and the retaining module with a tilting
30 action.
5. A storage port according to any preceding claim wherein the member has a cut-out for receiving the task module.

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6. A storage port according to claim 5 wherein the cut-out is provided with sprung fingers to hold the task module in position on the member.

5 7. A storage port according to claim 6 wherein the sprung fingers are integral with the member.

8. A storage port according to claim 5 wherein the task module is held in position on the member by
10 magnetic means.

9. A storage port according to any of claims 3-8 wherein a damper is provided to ensure smooth and controlled movement of the member.

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10. A storage port according to claim 9 wherein the damper comprises a damping plate which is adjacent and substantially parallel to one of the member and a surface of the storage port and mounted on the other of
20 the member and the surface; wherein a viscous substance is provided between the damping plate and said one of the member and the surface; such that on movement of the member, the damping plate moves with respect to said one of the member and the surface.

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11. A storage port according to claim 10 wherein biasing means are provided to push the damping plate against one of the member and the surface to which it is adjacent.

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12. A storage port according to claim 9 wherein the damping is provided by the pivot which is made from a flexible substance.

13. A storage port according to claim 1 wherein the mechanism includes said member for engagement with the task module, a second member for engagement with the retaining module and means to separate the two members on movement of the machine and retaining module upwards when the modules are located in the storage port.

14. A storage port according to claim 13 wherein the means to separate the two members comprises a cam located between the two members which is caused to rotate on upwards movement of the retaining module, when said retaining module is located in the storage port, thereby forcing the two members apart.

15. A storage port according to claim 14 wherein a rack and pinion arrangement is used to cause rotation of the cam on said upwards movement of the retaining module.

16. A storage port according to any of claims 13-15 wherein biasing means are provided to bias the member and second member towards one another.

17. A storage port according to any one of claims 13-16 wherein guide means are provided to maintain the member and the second member in a substantially parallel arrangement.

18. A storage port for separating a releasably coupled task module from a retaining module, said retaining module and storage port being located on different and relatively movable parts of a machine, the storage port comprising:

a relatively fixed member;

a relatively movable member which is engageable with a task module, said movable member being rotatable with respect to the fixed member about a pivot thereby to tilt said task module;

5 whereby when the task module is engaged with the movable member, linear movement of the retaining module relative to the storage port causes the movable member and the task module to rotate about the pivot, and thus breaking contact between the task module and the
10 retaining module with a tilting action.

19. A storage port for separating a releasably coupled task module from a retaining module, said retaining module and storage port being located on different and
15 relatively movable parts of a machine, the storage port comprising:

 a member which is engageable with the task module;
 a rotatable cam located between the task module
and retaining module, when said modules are located in
20 the storage port;

 whereby rotation of the cam separates the task module from the retaining module.